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already a considerable experience of men and affairs, he was drawn into national politics.

In Mr. Hyndman's narrative, Clemenceau's public life is made a part of the history of the times in which it has lain, and the author's account of the political events possesses an independent interest. Almost always Mr. Hyndman has something original to say. He throws new light on the Commune. He gives freshly interesting accounts of such episodes as the rise and fall of Boulanger, the Panama scandals that wrecked so many political careers, the Dreyfus case, the Caillaux affair. His description of conditions in France during the war, showing the extent of the menace from "the enemy within," is eye-opening.

Throughout, the man who between 1877 and 1893 destroyed no fewer than eighteen more or less reactionary administrations, who "more than any other man prevented the Republic from altogether deteriorating and kept alive the spirit of the great French Revolution in the minds and hearts of men;" who, when nearly eighty years of age, "became democratic dictator of France as no man has been for more than a century,"—this great fighter and leader is portrayed mostly by his acts, with a minimum of analysis. Mr. Hyndman's remarks, however, supply just the needed interpretations. They enable one to see, for example, just what Clemenceau's position was when he opposed Thiers in the national assembly; how well he understood both sides of the problem on that occasion—the attitude of the country people and that of the Parisians. His comments make evident the disinterested courage that led Clemenceau to speak in favor of the release of the indefatigable Communist Blanqui in 1879. They reveal the nature and extent of Clemenceau's labors in procuring a retrial for Dreyfus. The man's acts, properly emphasized, placed in their setting, and just sufficiently explained, give one a convincing picture of him.

In this book of Mr. Hyndman's there is not a single perfunctory word. Nor is there any reason to think that sympathy with radical opinions has biased the author's opinion. All is told from a radical point of view, but all is told truly; and whatever difference of emphasis might be given to the narrative by another historian in another time, the essential facts, the elements of greatness, here so vigorously set forth, cannot be other than Mr. Hyndman has represented them to be.

**DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE.** By George Pierce Baker. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

A statement of Dr. Baker's in the preface to his work so well defines the proper limitations of a book on dramatic technique that one can not better indicate the essentially sound character of the author's treatment of this subject than by quoting his words. "I have written," says Professor Baker, "for persons who cannot be content except when writing plays. I wish it distinctly understood that I have not written for the person seeking methods of conducting a course in dramatic technique. I view with some alarm the recent mushroom growth of such courses throughout the country. I gravely doubt the advisability of such courses. Dramatic technique is the means of expressing, for the stage, one's ideas and emotions. Except in rare

instances, undergraduates are better employed in filling their minds with general knowledge than in trying to phrase for the stage thoughts or emotions not yet mature."

So sane a pronouncement is reassuring in this day of pretentious courses, and of text-books that profess to do everything, even to supplying the undergraduate with a substitute for experience of life. And, coming from the head of the very successful "47 Workshop" the words have an authority that should carry weight.

To have a correct conception of one's purpose is half the battle always. That Professor Baker knows how to carry on the task to a practical end, no one who is familiar with the productions of the "47 Workshop," can doubt. A teacher under whose direction so original and entertaining a farce as *Free Speech*—to name but one out of a number of real plays—was written, ought to know what it is good for the budding dramatist to study.

In method of presentation, the author has not striven for new theory or for undue simplification of the old. He has stuck to the organic processes of play-writing—to the processes that the masters of the craft really pursue. He has formulated the problems as they actually present themselves to the worker. Notably he is not content with the mere analysis that so often seems the all in all to the pedagogic mind. As revealing his point of view, his chapter headings are illuminating: "From Subject to Plot—Clearing the Way;" "From Subject through Story to Plot"; "From Subject to Plot: Proportioning the Material." In each, the dynamic character of the process is emphasized: it is made plain that the dramatist must get somewhere. This thinking in dramatic terms, this adapting of means to end before a line of dialogue is written, is, of course, the heart of the subject. Four chapters are given to these organic processes, one to dialogue, and one to characterization.

A book constructed on the broadest lines, which are, when all is said, the most practical, yet a book exceedingly clear in definition and exceedingly definite as to rules established by long experience, Professor Baker's treatise throws the burden of play-writing, at last, where it belongs, and where every one truly interested in the art would wish to have it, upon the inventiveness, the patience, and the experimental skill of the playwright.

So excellent are the varied materials used by the author for illustration, so effective are often his comments in the way of arousing interest, that his book is well worth reading even by those who have no designs on the stage.

**SOCIALISM AND AMERICAN IDEALS.** By William Starr Meyers, Ph. D., Professor of Politics in Princeton University. Princeton: Princeton University Press,

Is Socialism the name of a definite, hidebound system or the name of a tendency? As John Spargo has pointed out, the classic socialism has never taken any deep hold upon America. Indeed, before Marxian socialism got far along the road of its professed aims in any country, Bolshevism—the rule of the under-dog—raised its head. What we have to deal with in America seems to be not so much socialism as a socialistic tendency that seems to threaten a gradual undermining of